

make enough dope in those places that they would be OK."

Oviatt's meth-cooking career ended on June 22, 1997. That's when her younger daughter called 9-1-1 from a hotel in Springfield Township and asked to speak with Limbert and Detective Bruce Berlin. Oviatt, who had left the hotel, was arrested later that evening.

She pleaded guilty to various charges, including racketeering and kidnapping, and received a 2-year sentence.

Police believe that by the time she went to prison, dozens of others had learned how to make methamphetamine, either directly from Oviatt or from one of her students.

South Akron is hotbed for meth

Oviatt and her proteges helped make mostly white, blue-collar Akron neighborhoods like Kenmore and Firestone Park—along with nearby Barberton and Springfield Township—the epicenter of meth making in Summit County.

It's in that general area that most of Summit County's meth labs have been found, including a would-be meth school operated by Brian Matheny, who police believe learned and improved on Oviatt's recipe.

A nurse by training, Matheny set up a lab in the basement of his Kenmore home, selling meth to support a substantial heroin habit.

Using a camera he had received for Christmas, he made an instructional video on meth manufacturing.

Police found the tape during a search of the basement in September 1997.

It shows Matheny coughing and exhaling hydrochloric gas, which is used in one step of the cooking process.

Penny Bishop, 43, got hooked on meth about the same time, and in the same general neighborhood, and eventually learned to cook as well—out of economic necessity.

Bishop says a friend introduced her to the drug in 1997, and she liked it immediately. In about two months, her habit grew from \$100 a week to \$400 as she switched from eating meth to smoking it.

"I had to have it just to get out of bed," Bishop said. "If I didn't have it, I wasn't moving."

Bishop depended on the drug to allow her to work long hours managing a gasoline station. But when her habit quickly exceeded her salary, the friend who first sold her meth began giving her money to buy cold pills.

She started shoplifting the pills so she could keep the cash and, as many meth addicts do, learned to make the drug herself.

Bishop, a high school dropout, said she caught on quickly.

"It was amazing I could take all these chemicals and make a drug, but I can't grasp simple things to get my GED," Bishop said.

By the late 1990s, many stores had begun limiting how many boxes of cold pills a person could buy at one time. (It takes about 1,100 standard-strength pills to make a 1-ounce batch of meth, roughly 280 doses.)

Meth cooks have generally sidestepped such measures by sending out groups of people to buy cold pills from as many stores as necessary to acquire the amount needed for the next batch.

Laws cripple cooks, but meth keeps coming. But in the last two years, authorities have gotten more aggressive in trying to squeeze the cooks.

About 40 states have passed laws to restrict the sale of pseudoephedrine products or are considering them.

In Ohio, legislators are considering a bill that would restrict sales of pseudoephedrine products.

The Oregon legislature agreed last month to make it a prescription drug. And Congress is considering a bill that would follow Okla-

homa's lead by requiring buyers of the pills to show identification and sign a log book.

A number of national retailers have voluntarily moved cold tablets to more-secure areas of their stores. And drug manufacturers are gearing up production of cold pills that contain phenylephrine—which cannot easily be converted into meth—instead of pseudoephedrine.

Since Oklahoma's pioneering law took effect last year, methlab seizures there have plummeted.

But not all the news is good. Narcotics detectives say there is more meth than ever in Oklahoma. And the quality is better.

With local cooks being shut down, the state's entrenched meth demand is now being met by Mexican narcotraficantes who have stepped up production, mostly south of the border, to supply a growing U.S. market.

Seizures of "ice"—the nearly pure form of meth churned out in Mexican super labs—have jumped nearly five fold in Oklahoma since its pseudoephedrine law took effect in April 2004.

Ice, which resembles shards of glass, "is like meth on rocket fuel," said Mark Woodward, a spokesman for the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs.

Because of its purity and strength, he said, it's more addictive and more dangerous than the home-cooked meth it's replacing.

As long as the demand for meth highs persists, the future does not look bright. There are no signs that meth use is dropping in the West, Midwest or Southeast—areas of the country where meth use has become entrenched.

More Californians were treated for methamphetamine addiction than alcoholism in 2003. And meth has started to make inroads into Pennsylvania, Maryland and rural communities of New York—the outskirts of the Northeast Corridor, which is home to 60 million people, one-fifth of the U.S. population.

Vermont and Maine have been bracing for an upswing in meth use and manufacturing. Two labs were recently found in Connecticut.

"Their numbers [of meth users] are going to go up," said Special Agent Michael Heald, a methamphetamine expert with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

Heald acknowledged that law enforcement's ability to stop the eastward surge of meth is limited. Prevention and treatment, he said, are the best weapons in this particular battle in the war on drugs.

"Until we teach people that drugs are absolutely destructive to ourselves and society, we can arrest all the people we can" and still not win, Heald said.

"We can't do this alone."

#### VIRGINIA FACT SHEET—COBURN AMENDMENT #1648 TO H.R. 2862

This amendment eliminates funding for the Advanced Technology Program (ATP) and shifts the funding to three separate programs: Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG), Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and the National Weather Service (NWS).

Specifically, funding for ATP is reduced by \$140 million, funding for JAG is increased by \$48 million, funding for COPS/Methamphetamine Hot Spots is increased by \$72 million, and funding for NWS is increased by \$4.9 million.

Since 1990, ATP has funneled more than \$700 million to Fortune 500 companies that do not require government assistance. For example, GE (revenues of \$152 billion in 2004) has received \$91 million from ATP, IBM (revenues of \$96 billion in 2004) has received \$126 million from ATP, and Motorola (revenues of \$31 billion in 2004) has received \$44 million from ATP since 1990.

Since 1990, Virginia has received an average of \$3.4 million from ATP each year. In fiscal year 2005, Virginia received \$9.7 million from Byrne JAG funding alone.

Even though ATP was created to fund research that cannot attract private financing, a Government Accountability Office study found that 63 percent of ATP grant recipients never even sought private financing. Quite simply, ATP funnels taxpayer money to billion dollar corporations that do not need government subsidies for research and development.

The National Association of Attorneys General, National District Attorneys Association, National Narcotics Officers Association Coalition, and National Sheriffs Association have all expressed support for the Coburn amendment.

Earlier this year, Judith Williams Jagdmann, the Attorney General of Virginia, co-signed a letter to Congressional leadership. The letter stated that funding cuts for law enforcement grants "will devastate state law enforcement efforts—especially drug enforcement—if they are not restored." In the absence of this amendment, Byrne JAG funding will be cut by \$6.5 million relative to 2005 levels.

In Virginia, at least 7 percent of high school students have admitted to using methamphetamines at least once. A July 2005 survey of law enforcement agencies conducted by the National Association of Counties found that "Meth is the leading drug-related local law enforcement problem in the country."

According to the same survey, 70 percent of responding officials stated that other crimes, including robberies and burglaries, had increased because of methamphetamine use.

The Methamphetamine Hot Spots program, part of COPS, addresses a broad array of law enforcement initiatives pertaining to the investigation of methamphetamine use and trafficking, trains law enforcement officials, collects intelligence, and works to discover, interdict, and dismantle clandestine drug laboratories. This amendment would ensure that this program receives the funding it needs to tackle the serious problems associated with methamphetamine use and distribution.

This amendment also increases funding for the National Weather Service, and directs the additional funding towards the Inland and Coastal Hurricane Monitoring and Prediction program and the Hurricane and Tornado Broadcast Campaign.

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